

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**164 NINE ASHES ROAD, HIGH ONGAR,
ESSEX**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

Authors: Thomas Muir (Fieldwork and report)	
NGR: TL 5877 0175	Report No: 5463
District: Epping Forest	Site Code: HONAR17
Approved: Claire Halpin MCIfA	Project No: 5452
	Date: 20 October 2017

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CONTENTS

OASIS SUMMARY

SUMMARY

- 1 INTRODUCTION**
- 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE**
- 3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS**
- 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**
- 5 METHODOLOGY**
- 6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS**
- 7 CONFIDENCE RATING**
- 8 DEPOSIT MODEL**
- 9 DISCUSSION**

**DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDICES

- 1 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS**
- 2 SPECIALIST REPORT**

OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	164 Nine Ashes, High Ongar, Essex		
<p><i>In October 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land at 164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Essex (NGR TL 5877 0175; Figs. 1 – 2). The evaluation was carried out in compliance with the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of a new 3-bedroom residential dwelling with basement, following removal of existing industrial buildings (Planning Ref. EPF/2159/12). The evaluation was required based on the advice of the Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA).</i></p> <p><i>The evaluation revealed the remains of a modern (20th century) brick building.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	October 2017		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work (Y/N/?)	TBC
P. number	5452	Site code	HONAR17
Type of project	Archaeological Evaluation		
Site status	-		
Current land use			
Planned development	Residential		
Main features (+dates)	20 th C brick building		
Significant finds (+dates)	None		
County/ District/ Parish	Essex	Epping Forest	High Ongar
HER/ SMR for area	Essex Historic Environment Record		
Post code (if known)	-		
Area of site	c.3500m ²		
NGR	TL 5877 0175		
Height AOD (min/max)	c.91m AOD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	Essex County Council		
Project supervisor	Archaeological Solutions Ltd		
Funded by	Approved Planning Services		
Full title	164 Nine Ashes, High Ongar, Essex. An Archaeological Evaluation		
Authors	Muir, T.		
Report no.	5463		
Date (of report)	October 2017		

164 NINE ASHES ROAD, HIGH ONGAR, ESSEX

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

In October 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land at 164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Essex (NGR TL 5877 0175; Figs. 1 – 2). The evaluation was carried out in compliance with the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of a new 3-bedroom residential dwelling with basement, following removal of existing industrial buildings (Planning Ref. EPF/2159/12). The evaluation was required based on the advice of the Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA).

The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, within the dispersed historic medieval and post-medieval settlement of High Ongar. The settlement is recorded on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER 45479). The site of proposed development lies on Paslow Wood Common with its associated settlement, and has a potential for medieval and post-medieval settlement remains. Historic cartographic sources note evidence of historic settlement, and the 1st edition OS map of c.1870 shows buildings in the vicinity of the proposed new dwelling. The present High Ongar parish is formed of two former parishes (High Ongar and Norton Mandeville). The parishes always exhibited settlement of a dispersed nature, numerous scattered manors and smaller farms, a small settlement of nucleated form in the area of High Ongar village, a church and hall complex at Norton Mandeville and cottages scattered around the greens of Norton Heath and Paslow Wood Common (EHER 45473).

The evaluation revealed the remains of a modern (20th century) brick building.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In October 2017 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land at 164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Essex (NGR TL 5877 0175; Figs. 1 – 2). The evaluation was carried out in compliance with the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the construction of a new 3-bedroom residential dwelling with basement, following removal of existing industrial buildings (Planning Ref. EPF/2159/12, revised as EPF/0053/15). The evaluation was required based on the advice of the Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA).

1.2 The evaluation represents the first phase of works required by the condition. If archaeological remains are present, ECC HEA may require further archaeological mitigation prior to the development.

1.3 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by the Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA, Richard Havis, *Brief for Archaeological Investigation at 164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, EPF/2159/12*, dated 14th August 2013), and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 20th August 2013), and approved by ECC HEA. The project conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Evaluation* (2014), and the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.4 The objectives of the evaluation were to determine the location, date, extent, character, condition significance and quality of any archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development.

Planning policy context

1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.6 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage

asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site is located on the eastern side of Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar. It comprises an area of hardstanding left following the removal of existing industrial buildings on the site, with a paddock area to the rear.

3 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

3.1 The site is situated at c.91m AOD on a small area of high ground c.2.7km to the west of the River Roding, with minor tributaries of that watercourse passing c.700m to the north and south respectively. The topography of the site is fairly flat, but the local landscape slopes down at a moderate gradient to the west towards the river, and slightly to the east onto the historic Paslow Wood Common.

3.2 The solid geology underlying the site is of the Claygate Member (sedimentary clay, silt and sand), overlain by superficial Head Deposits (clay, silt, sand and gravel) and wet, slightly acid but base-rich and clayey soils.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The site lies in an area of archaeological potential. Its history is dominated by dispersed historic medieval and post-medieval settlements (Medlycott 2004: figs.4-5). There has been a paucity of archaeological field work in the area, therefore evidence for prehistoric, Roman and Saxon activity is sparse. A concentration of Roman brick, tile and pottery suggests the presence of a building on the southern edge of Blackmore, significantly to the east (HER 850).

4.2 Dispersed medieval settlement included small settlements associated with manors at Blacknore to the east (HER 19009), Stondon Massey to the south (HER 19229), Kelvedon hatch to the south-west (HER 19247) and High Ongar to the west (HER 45479). Between these settlements was Paslow Wood common (HER 45473), which likely had sparse cottages or farms around its edge. Cropmark evidence suggesting that the site was just within the postulated western extent of the common.

4.3 Post-medieval settlement in the parish of High Ongar does not appear to have developed significantly, although there was some additional settlement around Paslow Wood Common. This included Nine Ashes Farmhouse c.1km to the north in the 16th century (HER

33012 & 33015), as well as a barn and Walnut Tree Cottage, also to the north in Nine Ashes in the 17th century (HER 33016 & 33014).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The ECC HEA required a sample of the footprint of the proposed new dwelling to be investigated by trial trenching. A single L-shaped trench of 15m x 1.6m was excavated (Fig. 2). The trench sought to locate the foundation remains of the former building shown on historic maps in order to determine the structure's age, nature and function.

5.2 The topsoil and subsoil was mechanically excavated under close archaeological supervision. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by hand and examined for archaeological features. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale, and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was searched for finds and the trenches were scanned by a metal detector.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 The trench description is presented below:

Trench 1 Fig. 2 & 9

Sample section 1A 0.0 = 90.61m AOD		
0.00-0.21m	L1000	Topsoil. Firm, dark grey brown, clayey silt with occasional small sub angular stones with CBM, glass, plastic
0.21-0.37m	L1001	Subsoil. Firm, mid orange brown, silty clay with occasional sub rounded stones
0.37m +	L1002	Natural. Firm, mid yellow orange silty clay

Sample section 1B 0.00 – 90.54mAOD		
0.00-0.20m	L1000	Topsoil. As above with frequent demolition rubble
0.20-0.32m	L1001	Subsoil. As above
0.32m+	L1002	Natural. As above

Description: Trench 1 revealed modern brick building foundations

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 Uppermost Topsoil L1000 was a firm, dark grey brown, clayey silt with occasional small sub angular stones with CBM, glass, plastic (0.20 – 0.21m thick).

8.2 Below L1000, Subsoil L1001 was a firm, mid orange brown, silty clay with occasional sub rounded stones.

8.3 At the base of the sequence the natural, L1002, was a firm, mid yellow orange silty clay (0.32 – 0.37m below the present day ground surface).

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 Modern brick building foundations were revealed. Examination of a sample of the brick records that it is a Fletton brick with the initials L.B.C. stamped on both sides of the deep, angular frog; indicating it was made by the London Brick Company, who produced millions of this type of brick in the 1920s-1960s, enabling the building boom of the inter- and post-war periods (CBM Report below).

9.2 Examination of the cartographic evidence records the history of the site. The Chapman and Andre map of 1777 (Fig. 4) depicts a sparse distribution of cottages or farmsteads around Parslow wood common. The latter appears to have encroached upon by enclosures from its medieval extent. The site is located between the western edge of the common and Nine Ashes Road, close to the south and west of the northern-most buildings on that side of the common, but undeveloped. This record is confirmed by the more accurate survey of the Tithe Map of 1848 (Fig. 5), which depicts the site as within an arable field immediately to the south of houses that front on to Nine Ashes Road, with further cottages to the east on the historic edge of the common. However, by the time the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map is published in 1896 (Fig. 6), the complex of building close to the north has extended, bisecting the field that contains the site, and an elongated building appears to extend across the northern half of the site. This arrangement of buildings and fields continues to be depicted on the 1920 OS map (Fig. 8).

9.3 The brick sample (which is of 20th century date) indicates that the brick building revealed in the trial trench is more recent than the first depiction of the building (1st Edition OS Map of 1896). Possibly the more recent brickwork is derived from a modern extension.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with inventory, will be deposited at Epping Museum in accordance with their requirements. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. In addition to the overall site summary, it will be necessary to produce a summary of the artefactual and ecofactual data.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Approved Planning Services for funding the evaluation and for their assistance (in particular Mr Neil Cooper).

AS would like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Maria Medlycott of Essex County Council Place Services.

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APPENDIX 1 - Concordance of Finds
HONAR17, P5452, 164 Nine Ashes Road, Ongar

Feature	Context	Segment	Trench	Description	Spot Date	Pot Qty	Pottery (g)	CBM (g)	A.Bone (g)	Other Material	Other Qty	Other (g)
				Modern Feature	20th C			2632				

APPENDIX 2

SPECIALIST REPORT

The Ceramic Building Materials

Andrew Peachey

A single complete brick (2362g) was sampled from 'modern feature'. The brick is a Fletton brick with the initials L.B.C. stamped on both sides of the deep, angular frog; indicating it was made by the London Brick Company, who produced millions of this type of brick in the 1920s-1960s, enabling the building boom of the inter- and post-war periods.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1
View of site looking north



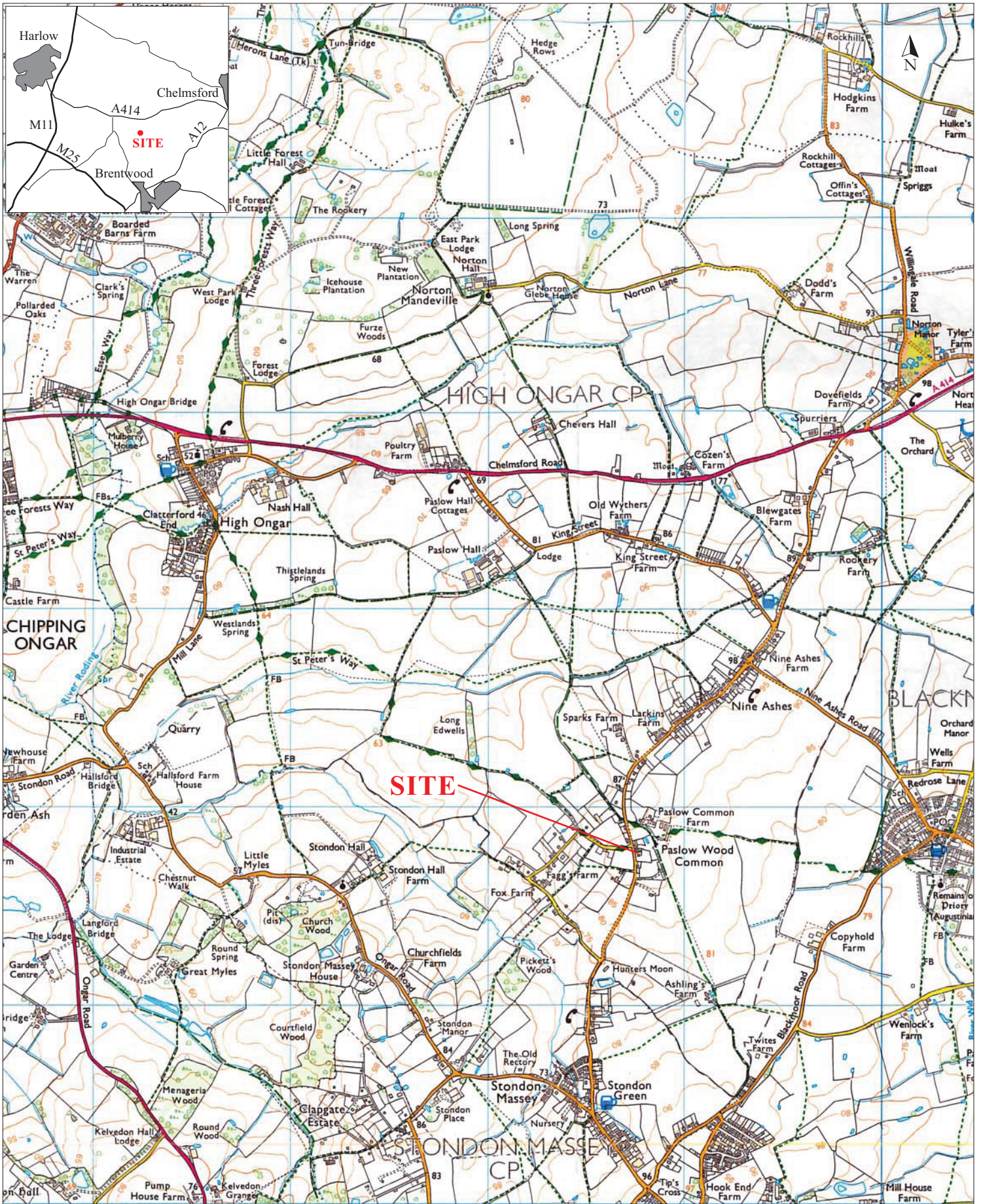
2
Sample section 2



3
Trench 1 looking south

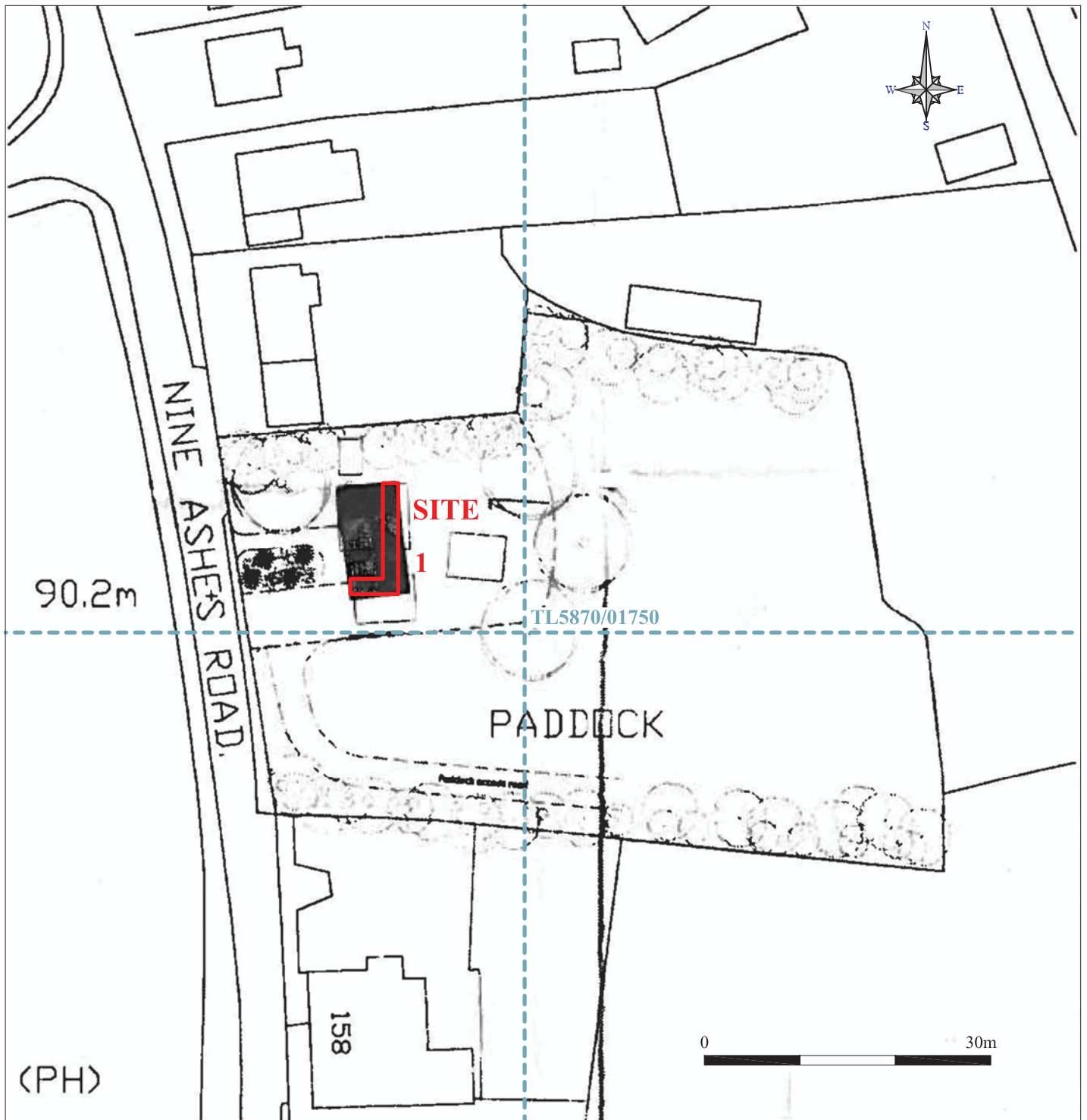


4
Remains of brick structure looking east

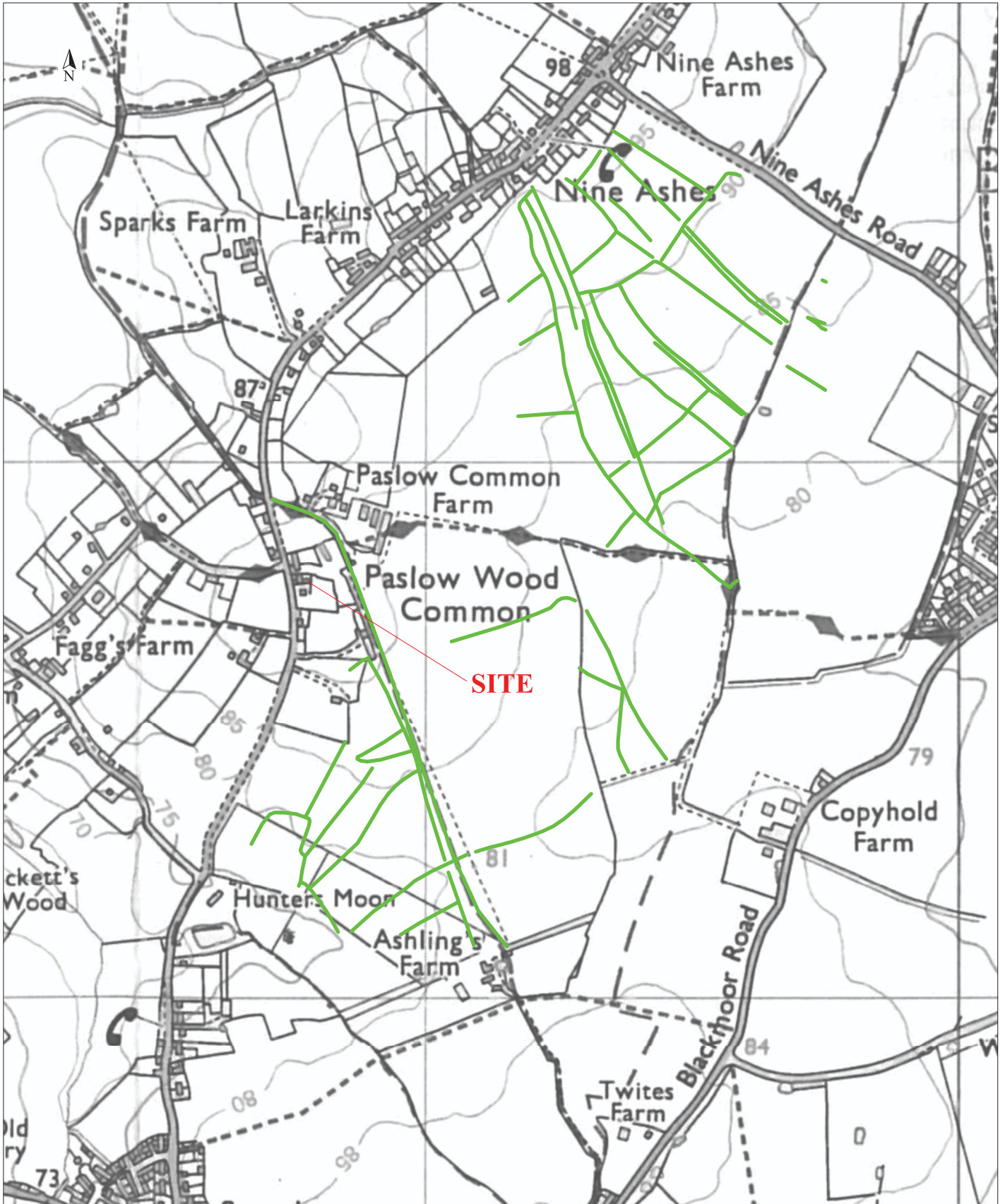


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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Essex (P5452)



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:600 at A4
164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Essex (P5452)

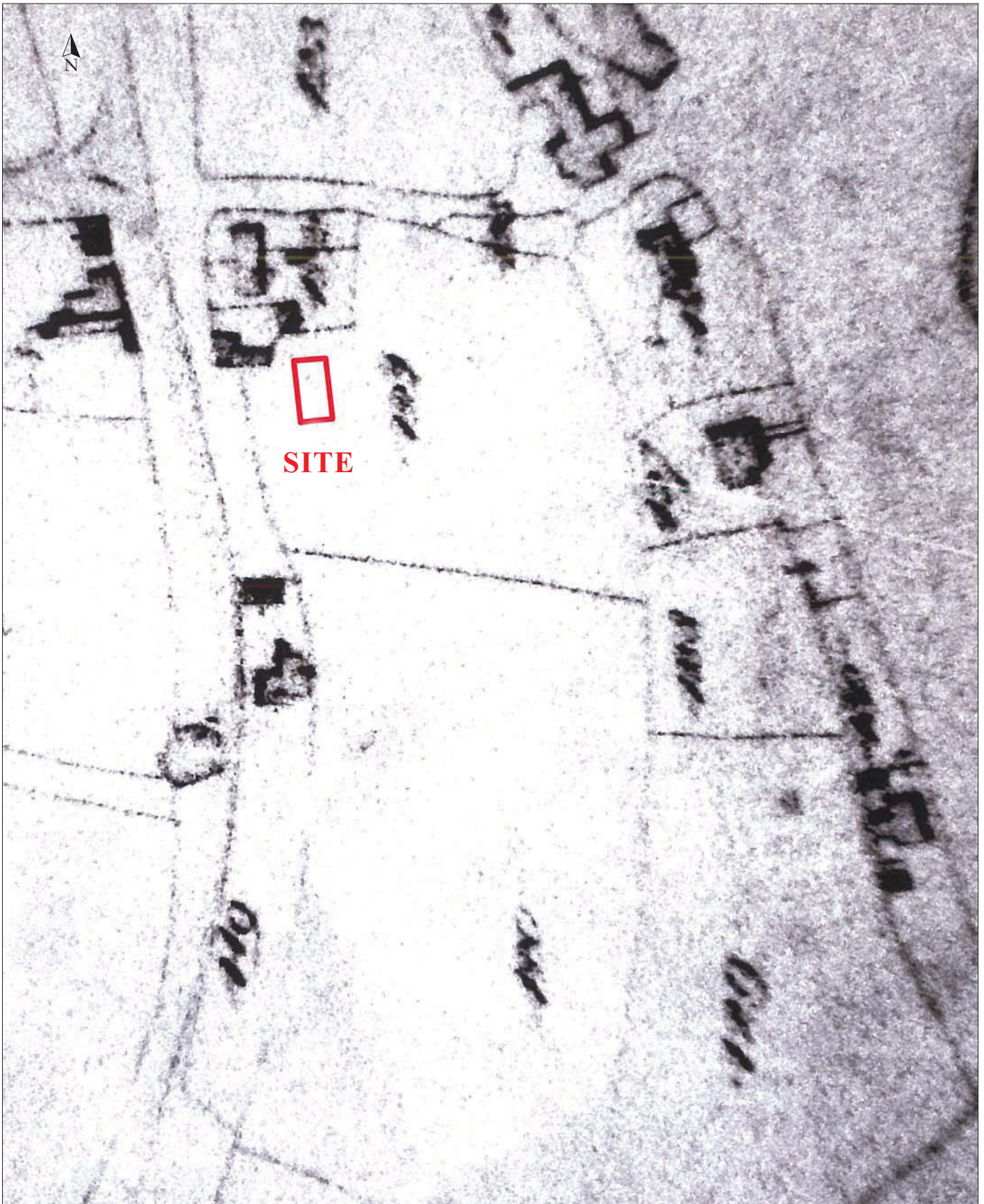


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Fig. 3 Cropmark data
 Scale 1:10,000 at A4
 164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Essex (P5452)



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Fig. 4 Chapman & Andre's map, 1777
Not to scale
164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Essex (P5452)

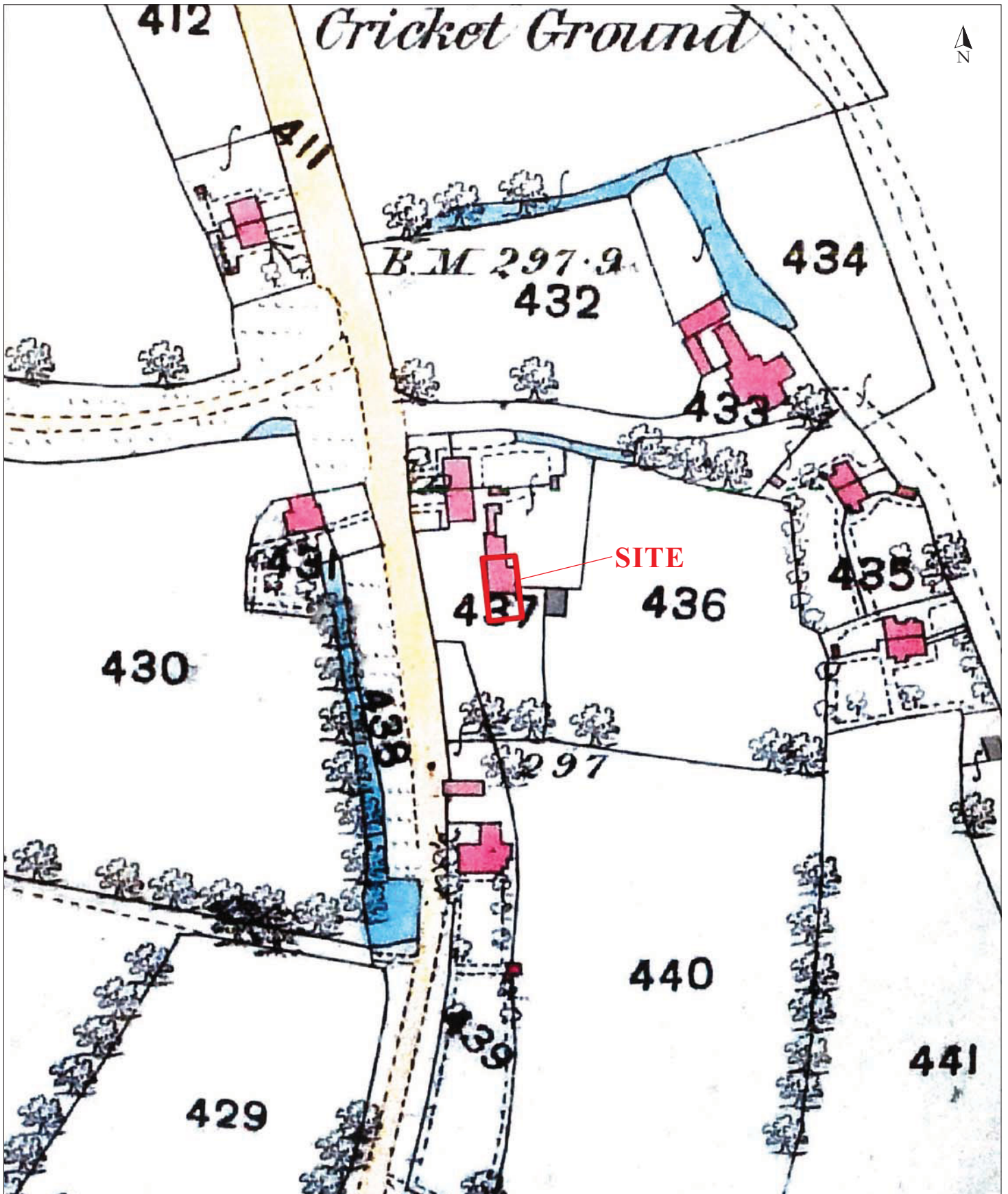


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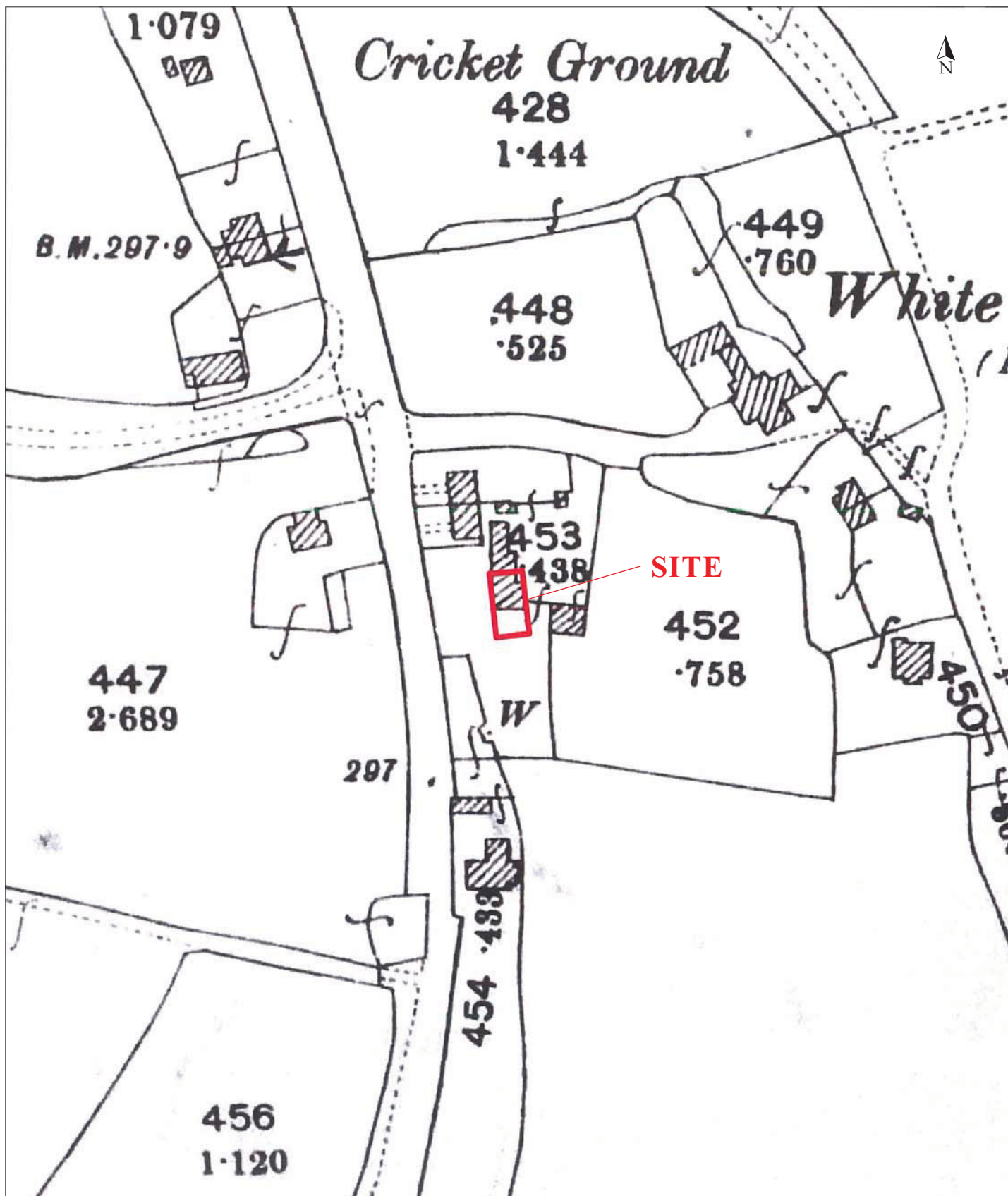
Fig. 5 Tithe map, 1848

Not to scale

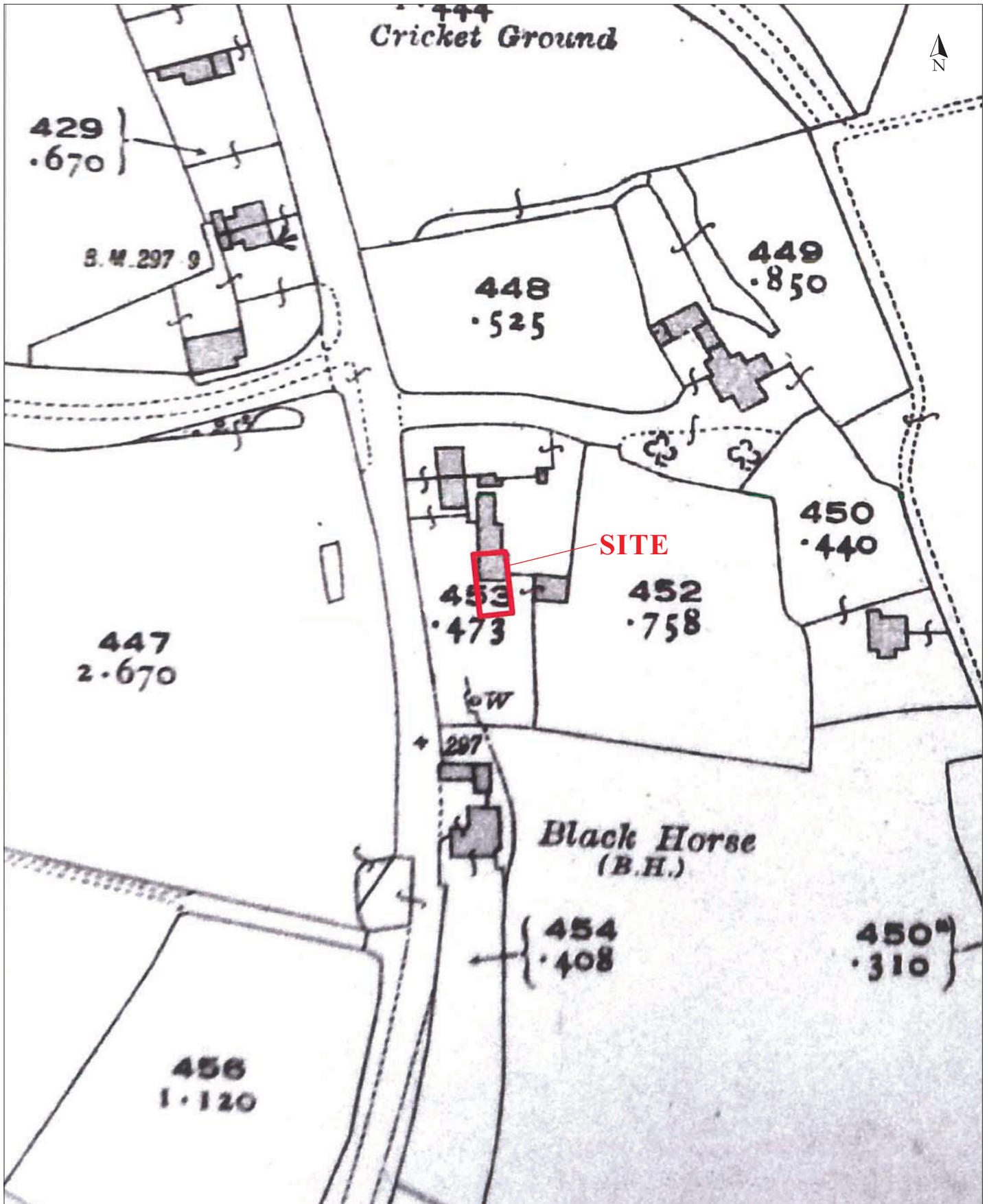
164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Essex (P5452)



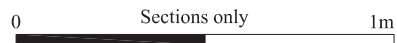
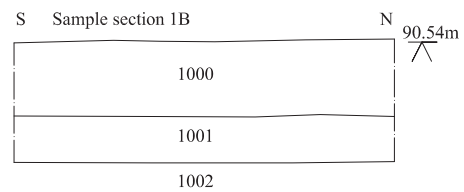
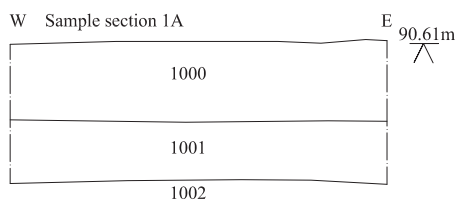
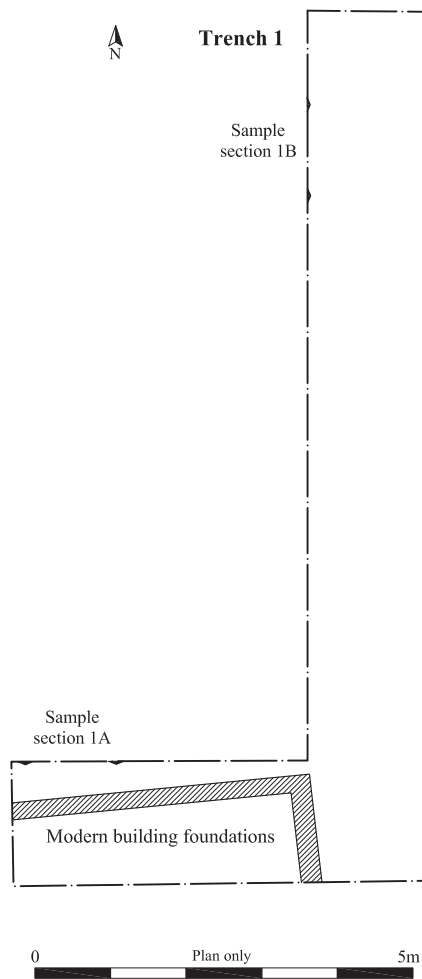
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Fig. 6 OS map, 1873
Not to scale
164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Essex (P5452)



<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
Fig. 7 OS map, 1896
Not to scale
164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Essex (P5452)



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Fig. 8 OS map, 1920
Not to scale
164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Essex (P5452)



<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
Fig. 9 Trench plan and sections
Scale Plan 1:100, sections 1:20 at A4
164 Nine Ashes Road, High Ongar, Essex (P5452)